

Transportation Preservation Society of Montana
Proponent for Senate Bill 190
2007 Legislature

SENATE HIGHWAYS

EXHIBIT NO. 4

DATE 1-18-07

BILL NO. SB-190

RECREATION TRAIL

We have bragging rights in Montana to live in a primitive State of profound activity, far from the wandering crowds of the inner-cities. My request is that you don't take away these bragging rights by looking at a trail system that is like our neighboring States. Why do we need a trail system that cuts through our backyards, and for many our front yards, our pasture lands, through Wheat fields and across grazing lands. **We have an excellent alternative.**

President Dwight Eisenhower with a commission of Americans put together a National Interstate system 50 years ago. A system for travel across the country, across our State with the foresight to know our country was going to populate. Because of this Interstate system we have gained two lane highways, frontage roads and for us a Recreation Road. Let's continue the Eisenhower vision of the 50's and add a trail along our roads, and more precisely the Recreation Road that starts at Spring Hill and continues to Cascade and Great Falls. From Helena to Spring Hill exit we can share the right-of-way of a County road. A representation of the landowners has given us the "nod" for this trail that potentially will cross their land.

My father helped plan the Interstate system in the 1950's for my birth State. I know he wanted to leave the old highways and frontage roads to the people to enjoy, enjoying those casual two lane roadways with a lifestyle unlike the big cities. I am here today to ask your help that will allow a study for the Recreation Trail and make it possible for Montanan's to enjoy the natural wonder areas that we still have in Montana. The areas are those that what we pack in we pack out, no trash containers, no unwanted paved parking areas, and no unaltered landscapes that take away from the scenic views.

Keep in mind if you will that the proposed trail along the Recreational Road already has 14 latrines in place, existing parking and picnic areas all maintained by the Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks or Department of Transportation. These areas do not need to be recreated or budgeted. **They exist now.**

Our plan today with the Recreation Trail continues to keep Montana natural wonder areas unaltered. The proposed trail allows the greatest of recreational possibilities by giving a trail to the people of Montana and the railroad to commerce. Thus providing for an economic society that we know exists and continues to thrive in our great State. We need to leave the major trail workings for the inner-city folks who unlike us are trapped with urban sprawl.

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The Recreation Road traffic count as provided by the Montana Department of Transportation shows the Recreation Road numbers to be a range of 5 to 10 percent of the recorded data of the Interstate I-15 for the latest documents of 2005. The Recreation Road recorded data is constant and unchanged in the past ten years. A contrast to Interstate 15 counts showing an increase of activity year after year. That is why the Interstate system was proposed and came to life. And, that is why today we have a Recreation Road that exists. Help us Montanan's by making this an all purpose route from Helena to Great Falls. The study we are asking for today will give us the results we need to determine the feasibility of bike path that can be a permanent and safe route.

I today am asking you to give your help to give the folks in Montana what they merit, a safe environment to walk, run, bike or carry a fly rod to the river.
You can do that by supporting this Recreational Trail proposal as represented in SB 190.

The "Bill of Rights" gave us the right to free speech. Today my verbal and written request is that respected freedom of speech and my being here is the right you have allowed for me. **Thank you for listening, kindly consider the positive affects and safety aspect of this Senate Bill.**

Frederick Verzani
January 18, 2007
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